THE UNIVERSALIST *Leader*

A JOURNAL OF LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY FOUNDED BY HOSEA BALLOU IN 1819

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Continuing the CHRISTIAN LEADER and its predecessors (1819 to 1897), the UNIVERSALIST and its predecessors (1827 to 1897), the GOSPEL BANNER (1835 to 1897), the UNIVERSALIST LEADER (1897 to 1926), and THE CHRISTIAN LEADER (1926 to 1953).

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The bond of fellowship in this church shall be a common purpose to do the will of God as Jesus revealed it and to co-operate in establishing the Kingdom for which he lived and died.
To that end we avow our faith in
God as Eternal and All-conquering Love,
The spiritual leadership of Jesus,
The supreme worth of every human personality,
The authority of truth known or to be known,
And in the power of men of good will and sacrificial spirit to overcome all evil and progressively establish the Kingdom of God.

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April, 1959 — No. 4

The cover picture is a woodcut of a German village near the city of Ulm from which Dr. and Mrs. Ulrich have just returned after a period of work for the Universalist Service Committee in cooperation with that great German social service agency, Arbeiter Wohlfahrt. This beautiful woodcut is one of a folio of six done by the distinguished artist Julius Heilenmann and given to the editor by Dr. and Mrs. Ulrich.

Angus H. MacLean, dean of the Theological School, St. Lawrence University, and the editor of this paper share the belief that American liberal religionists should definitely enter the conversation on theology which is going on in the contemporary Christian world. **The Liberal Approach to Theology,** the text of a recent address by Dr. MacLean, is in this editor's opinion, a very worthy contribution to this important conversation. We are happy to present it to our readers in this number.

Albert F. Ziegler gives us his fourth installment on the important series, Foundations of Faith, in the essay **What's in It for Me?**

Henry F. Pommer, Universalist minister and teacher of American literature, has some good, old-fashioned, "plain talk" on one of the besetting sins of religious liberalism in his excellent **Letter from Linesville.**

Llewellyn Jones is one of a very small number of our old friends and colleagues who is thoroughly competent to write critically about twentieth-century poets. We are, therefore, most happy to continue his series with number nine on **Theodore Roethke.**

The Liberal Approach to Theology

Angus H. MacLean

The following is the text of an address delivered at Senexet in January, to a group of liberal clergymen and teachers in the field of theological education. Dean MacLean here enters the contemporary theological conversations going on in the world. He opens up the liberal point of view in its bearings on the important matter of rethinking our theological position while we maintain the integrity of our free and growing faith.

DEVELOPMENTS in society and specifically within religion are coercing some liberals into recognizing the unexamined condition of their faith, and to feel that this is not a satisfactory condition. Some leaders are concerned, and in the churches there is a widespread theological discontent. It no longer holds that the new world can best be served by discarding theology. Simultaneously, there is evidence of a new interest in religion in fields of study in which until recently religion was regarded widely as the excusable preoccupation of the dawn man. Eric Fromm, Rollo May, Gordon Allport, and Arthur Jersild find it necessary to have a good orientation in classical and modern theology and regard religion and theology as normal human phenomena that can serve the enlightened and mature as well as the simple and primitive mind. So it happens that theology as a mark of orthodoxy, and religion as the concern of the naive are no longer regarded as advanced points of view. There are beginnings of a real search for a religion in keeping with the needs of the free and mature mind.

The statement about to be made here can be regarded as the elementary and belated effort of one liberal who can only justify it in the light of the general poverty of thought amongst us, and especially in the light of the almost total failure in communication between those of us caught up in the current theological renaissance and those of us who are engaged in the religious education of the young. The insights in this statement, if there are any, come out of the effort to meet the needs of youth rather than from theological studies.

The drive back of the human quest for meaning and system and value is a powerful one, but the efforts to articulate and organize these have been most troublesome. No human enterprise has been fraught with more serious consequences. On the ground of what is thought about life men have been declared heretical, and, at times, have been destroyed by their fellows. Among the theologically literate, even in our day, the tensions are strong. To every Emile Brunner who makes a declaration, there is a strident "Nein" from some Karl Barth. Among the theologically innocent the suspicion of the other's convictions is a mark of faithfulness and loyalty to one's own church. Among liberals, too, the tensions prevail even though we cannot be credited with much for intellectual effort. On the one hand, traditional Christian doctrines are regarded as a lot of rubbish, and on the other, as providing the only lasting forms and figures.

The trouble is not alone with the difficulty of the subject, which is troublesome enough. The fact that so many who dare to explore the mind of God are so lacking in modesty, even when they regard pride as the sin of sins, adds not a little to the problem; but I feel that this immodesty, like other facets of the problem, is rooted in the way we think about truth, in the expectations with which we seek it. The notions that it can be presented adequately and permanently for one and all, that we should have a doubt-free sense of certainty about what we believe, are real troublemakers. So also is the inability to differentiate between words or symbols and the truths they represent. The Scottish Covenanters were often bound to stakes on beaches, and as the tides threatened to cover them they were begged to say, "God save the King." If they did say it, no matter what rancor remained in their hearts for the authorities, they were saved. In much the same way the words of religion tend to be used.

There is little wonder that people have responded

as they have. Some are intimidated, and suffer from a profound sense of inadequacy and disorientation. Some add worry and guilt to these feelings. Many settle for a religious thought system without thought. Masses of men shun all thought of or dealings with religion. Some cling to the word God even when it is empty of meaning, and some will leave the church if you mention it. Some want a warm emotionalized religion with a minimum of thought, some seek a religion of thought divested of all feeling. Some feverishly preoccupy themselves with work, seek distraction in their off hours, and take a pill when they retire lest a thought about life might take them unawares. And, of course, it might just do that, for it has been known since Adam and Eve ducked into the bushes, that one cannot hide from life's basic realities.

What can we do with a problem of this sort? It is reasonable to suppose that something *can* be done with it, for people do find ways out of theological perplexities and their attendant anxieties without too much dodging of reality. Some do escape meaninglessness despite the cults of meaninglessness rampant in our time. So I hopefully, very simply, and naively approach this problem from the standpoint of the free, mature man's experience, and with no greater goals in mind than to help open a way to getting a more fruitful perspective on the problem, to accept its challenge happily, and, perhaps, to give some hints as to why I believe that we can deal with it profitably. Bewailing the illiteracy in religion will bear little fruit unless and until there is some basic shift in our approach to the study.

I.

First, *I would say that the truth about anything is never fully exhausted, and that there is never just one truth about anything.* There may be two or more truths about the same thing that seem quite contradictory. No possible perspective permits a wholly inclusive grasp of reality. Truths about the same thing may be as different as the tusk and tail of the proverbial elephant, and I need hardly say that this neglected insight is not new. If you were to ask a chemist to find the truth about me in terms of his special field, he would reduce me to some small amounts of carbon, gas, and maybe salts. The physicist, the biologist, the psychologist, and the artist can do likewise in terms of their fields. And if you were to ask my wife and neighbors, you would get other answers of an entirely different sort, and, possibly, equally true. I read the other day that "man is an assemblage of rather second rate plumbing," and if you cared to, you could find plenty of evidence to support this definition. Curiously, among the various scientific disciplines, we find little or no quarrel with each other's findings. The chemist does not claim to exhaust the subject of his analysis. He fully accepts the physicist's analysis. If so much is the case with me as subject, how many more perspectives on eternity, life, or the universe! *So I conclude that perspectives, aspects, the categories of study with which we must work, and the truth-revealing capacities of doctrines and symbols make a difference that we must bear in mind.*

Looking at life in a certain context, we may find grounds for the idea that we cannot know anything for sure, that man is a blind, helpless creature in a meaningless universe. We can find a lot of evidence to support the contention that man is prone to evil and doomed to tragedy unless some agency above nature takes a notion to rescue him. At the same time, in another context, what hymns of praise have been justifiably written, and will be written, about this aspiring creature who sings and prays and longs for immortality; about this Godlike creature who hopes and thinks beyond nature and time, and who can die that others may live. How much of the truth can be gathered from any such single perspective? And what are the implications of our answers to this question?

Moreover, truth is not only like the elephant interpreted by the exploring hands of blind men, *it has a dynamic quality that demands the eternal reconstruction of our representations of it.* Let us say that we have the truth. Then someone invents a wheel or discovers fire or cracks an atom and we haven't it at all. As an example in our time, the population problem now emerging is going to require modification of our fondest faith in charities, and in the current modes of loving our fellow men. Add to this the insistence on the part of psychologists like Gordon Allport that the mature individual's "religious sentiment" is marked by uniqueness, and we have a requirement of openness that theology has rarely allowed for, and which religionists must of necessity respect. So, we can hardly take a pot shot at truth and assume we have done the necessary hunting for the day. Yet, although left with the impossibility of corralling all of the truth, there is still the necessity of finding a theological relationship to reality by which to live happily, productively and peacefully.

II.

If liberals are ever to come to grips with the problems of religion so as to give their faith some powers of communication with young or old, *they will have to look for the realities of mature experience back of religious concepts, ideas, doctrines, and symbols, and*

weigh the effectiveness of conceptual patterns in representing the realities of experience. Certain serious life experiences, and joyous ones, too, are reflected in the doctrines of the various religions. So instead of asking if we believe in natural depravity, in the innate goodness of man, in immortality, in revelation, in damnation, in the idea that God is love or that he keeps a fire going for the recalcitrant, *one should inquire as to what valid human experiences gave rise to such doctrines.* We may find that some doctrines still adequately represent certain inescapable facts of experience. We may find that others so emphasize certain aspects of experience to the neglect of others that they have become distortions of experience or untruths. But we can never overlook the problems of experience in which they are rooted. The doctrine of natural depravity may outrage our sensitivities, but dare we neglect the facts of nature that produced the Nazi concentration camps? The concept of the "grace of God" is little used amongst us, yet I know that I am the recipient of unmerited regard and love and privilege without which I cannot live in health although I can neither buy, nor command these. What do I call this experience or suggest as its source? If I use the term "grace" am I, therefore, a reactionary in religion? If I use a substitute term, does that convict me of religious insensitivity?

James Luther Adams, one of our wisest American liberals, finds that the concept of "The living Christ" has great meaning for him. The question appropriate here is not, "Is there a living Christ?" but rather, "What in our experience is there that can be meaningfully represented for some enlightened people by the figure of a living Christ?" Personally, I would not use the term, *but I am fairly certain that the experience it symbolizes has not altogether escaped me.* In the last few days I happened to be speaking to two different liberals who used the term "salvation." One had had a great experience of reconciliation to life. He had lost an overpowering sense of guilt. He felt free and was increasingly productive. He felt that life was good, commanding, and thrilled to it. Maybe he had every right to use the word although not with all its historic connotations. The other thought that in living the life of love and respect for other humans, he mediated "salvation" to them We know enough of the restoring power of love and respect to know that he was not talking nonsense. He too, perhaps, had every right to the word. We might use different terms, but the real question is, *do we know these experiences?*

Coming at this problem in another way, we should recall that it is quite possible for people, for example, to believe in God for quite different, sometimes quite opposite, reasons. In associating with some who do not use the word, we find that they are just as sensitive and rich in experience as we are who do use the term, and that the terms they use represent pretty closely what we mean by the word "God." There are also persons who use the word fervently, who may even pose as champions of God, for whom the word is nothing more than a projection of themselves with all their frailties into the seat of universal sovereignty. Their God may belong to the Republican or Democratic party, share their race prejudice and all their beloved limitations. This is the nearest thing to atheism I have ever encountered. Here is a God who never stands in judgment on one's self, but rather justifies and supports weakness. If this is true, we should ask just what a God-recognizing experience is, what substitute words can be used to represent a sense of one's creatureliness, recognition of universal sovereignty, or a consciousness of the undeserved gifts of life, or whatever the God experience may mean. I remember a church leader in one of my classes at Columbia University who disliked Negroes and contended that they were really not human. They could be loved as we love dogs and horses, but not as we do humans. God made them that way. And so her God carried the burden of her sinning. So, I suggest that part of our approach to theology is a serious inquiry into the realities of carefully checked *experience back of professions of belief.*

If we ever seek to develop anything approaching a system of thought, it should have at its core a factual orientation in significant human experiences and their attendant problems, this orientation progressively refined. This would give us some basic structure not at war with the needed constant reconstruction characteristic of the mature religious mind. We can get little sense of continuity and security from rigid doctrines in such a dynamic age as ours, but we can get a sense of rightness with reality by recognizing, for instance, the little understood destructive potentials of man, his need of and capacity for love, the power that comes to him at times in the face of disaster, or the wisdom that comes to him unbidden at times.

III.

I suggest that in our attack upon theology, *we give special attention to the dynamic content of religion.* Some speak of the liberal faith as having no content, which is like a contradiction in terms. *Openness is not emptiness.* There are values that safeguard freedom and that *are* the essence of revision and renewal, and these provide us with our surest sense of continuity

and security. In the theological fabric we weave there is warp as well as woof, and it is this warp, the vertical lines of attitude, value, and method of approach that I would emphasize at this point. We must always work a pattern of ideas with the shuttle that places the lateral or cross threads in terms appropriate to the knowledge and culture of our time and place, for man needs a sense of system and form. And, of course, we need to keep such patterns from becoming frozen, and so prevent responsiveness to changing circumstances, for mature religion is also heuristic or investigative. *In this necessary openness we have, not a vacuity, but a value content.* While we can get a sense of having a religion as well as seeking one from systematized ideas and values, we have it in greatest measure in the dynamic values involved in the religious quest. These give us goals beyond us all, thus saving us from contentiousness in defending our rightness, but there is something more vital than this. We trust love as a way of life, for example. We must, of course, enlarge our conceptions of love, but when we do so we do not discard it. We extend and refine it. Because of the principle of justice and love, I feel closer to Amos and Hosea than I do to many living and renowned ecclesiastics. Isn't this significant? The kind of security we have parallels that experienced by the scientists, for I suspect their security in work is a derivative of demonstrated methods of attack rather than of conclusions. The scientist operates in the realm of empirical data and the religionist primarily seeks "adequate meaning," and the values of operation, of approach or address to problems are as important to the one as to the other. The great family of values associated with the concept of love are the enduring content, and this content needs refinement rather than replacement. This is in part what I meant in that sometimes misunderstood document in which I spoke of method as message. I would add this too, that if theology was systematized in terms of problems of experience, theological doctrines generally could be regarded as in process of progressive refinement rather than as fixed things that need to be retained at all costs or discarded and replaced. Some people who have heard me say these things suspect me of orthodoxy. Because I have no quarrel with some people who use traditional terms, they seem to think that I argue merely for the continued use of old doctrines with new content. On the contrary, I believe that uniformity in language leads to the idolatrous use of language, and away from root experiences. I believe we should make our experiences articulate in every possible way, with art media as well as with varied verbal systems.

Others have assumed that I say that it does not matter what words we use. But it does matter. Some concepts just haven't the capacity of adequately representing experience, still less capable of representing them permanently. Concepts and symbols are partial peep holes from which to look at reality, and maybe this accounts for the current theological befuddlement over paradoxes. Moreover, the symbols — words or things — that are most serviceable to some are not so for others.

IV.

The theological phase of the religious life cannot be dealt with as a thing apart. Our theological confusion is probably in part rooted in other facets of our religious life. We shall have to, for example, give attention to the more disciplined and faithful witnessing to the values we pretty generally acknowledge as having command over us. Those in "the way" have a better chance of finding the way. Confusion can be in direct proportion to the degree we betray our professed commitments. In witnessing to human values our little social service and social action programs are far too marginal to support our thinking. We believe in "one world" and do little towards living in it. We believe in brotherhood while too many of us show more fear over doing something about the race problem than over doing nothing about it. At many points our integrity is deeply involved, and my claim is that this deeply affects our thinking. Did you ever know a person, actively engaged in living what he believes, to be greatly worried over what he believes? We are all, to a degree, MacBeths. The moment we deal with the witches so as to compromise our integrity, the final Soliloquy about life's meaningless sound and fury is already being written. The theological problem is more deeply rooted than most are inclined to think, but I still do not regard it as unsurmountable. In this particular connection, I might say that religion has heretofore found ways to let people live in a culture within a culture, and so in a measure made the validation of its thinking possible.

In the approaches I suggest I see a number of values. First, the greater capacity for the generous reception of the ideas of those, individuals or cultures, who do not use our thought frames. Second, I think they open a way for both a confident sense of having a religion and seeking one too. And I might add, the acceptance of theology as the exploration of one of the most exciting facets of the religious life. I see in it also the possibility of organizing our common thought forms, open and fluid as they must be, so as to make them teachable. At the mention of teaching, another swarm

(Continued on page 99)

Foundations of Faith

IV. What's in It for Me?

Albert F. Ziegler

THE fundamental question that a person asks of life is "What's in it for me?" This phrase has come to be a symbol to us of a shallow, self-seeking attitude when applied to man's relations with man. But it is the deepest of perception when posed by each individual in his basic relation with life. And it is only as he is assured of ultimate justification that he can be free to forget self in the existential situation. Jesus' admonition that "whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it," becomes sensible to us when we realize that "for my sake" is an expression of the all-encompassing assurance of the acceptance of one's life, within which it is possible to expend life not only without loss, but for growth.

It is a religious question that man asks. It must have a religious answer. It is a question that goes beyond the immediate situation into ultimate causes and meanings; beyond time into infinity; beyond the mortal into the divine; beyond this life and death; therefore beyond reason into faith. It is a question which in the answering makes religion to be religion and not science, and in which the only adequate answer is believable but not provable. Any effective religion finds its meaning and strength in an avowal of the infinite and eternal value of persons.

Orthodoxy's version of this affirmation is rendered ineffective to many, not only or even essentially because of its language and form, but by reason of its unjustifiable union with particular and unchanging moral codes. The measure of effectiveness it still retains for some derives from the fact that it does provide an ultimate view, even though the end thereof may be rejection. It does not, however, get its power from the "fear of hell," from the threat of rejection, but from the stubborn hope by each person that he will, somehow, be among those accepted. The threat of rejection that seems to some to be the power of religion is an unwarranted use of the human need for acceptance as a force to keep the person in obedience to certain established modes of thinking and behavior. The fatal flaw in orthodoxy is that it teaches a dependent acceptance, making itself, thereby, the shallowest kind of humanism. By limiting the power of God in the life of each person to the capabilities of that person, it, in effect, denies the existence of a competent universe purpose and force. In humanism and orthodoxy alike, a person's "salvation," his growth in life and his ultimate justification in eternity, is wholly dependent on his efforts and ability. Both enjoin man to live morally, giving him the doubtful blessing of the freedom to choose the way of salvation or damnation.

This is not enough to give us the assurance we need to live creatively. Freedom is not enough. We know our faults. We doubt our ability to measure up to the demands for a cosmic acceptance. Orthodoxy attempts to plug this gap by proposing the magic formula of vicarious atonement. We are not able to merit salvation, but there is a man who is able, and by his supernatural and superabundant ability, we may be benefited to salvation. This can be religiously effective to a degree, as demonstrated by John Murray in the beginnings of our Church, except that in orthodoxy it is again, gratuitously (except to the institution of orthodoxy) linked to and made dependent on a particular creedal expression.

True religion is in the teaching that the ultimate acceptance of every person is assured beyond affecting; that nothing he does or does not do, or that is done to him or not done for him, can affect the fact that he is a child of the universal purpose and will be brought in that purpose eternally toward his perfecting. Acceptance as a reward for virtue, or rejection as a punishment for sin, have no part in a healthy religious faith. Much less does the framework we may choose for our faith have to do with salvation. The kind of religious expressions we choose to engage in are a matter of concern and effect only superficially unless we are restricted to expressions which destroy the value of the faith to us. *We should be free to hold our faith in whatever terms make it most vital to us.* We should be zealous to find what is for us

the most dynamic expression of the faith we live by. But life continues to support us and move us on even while we search, and regardless of the terms in which we find it.

Similarly, our ethical state does not change the interest life has in us, but does have serious consequences in the state of our mind and living. The Winchester Profession asserted that "Holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected," and Hosea Ballou led the Universalists into the firm conviction that while man has not the power to damn himself, he can make himself damnably miserable in the process of salvation. This divorce of ethics from faith seems to the orthodox to destroy the essential value of religion, but, in fact, it frees religion from the little prize-package in which it has been kept so long, and makes it effective in carrying out its true function. It was not meant to bind men to temporal custom, or to discourage them in their imperfect state, but rather, by claiming them for a divine function, free them and inspire them to creative living. It makes the full power of faith operative for every person in every condition or circumstance.

Ethics is a matter of science rather than of faith, and finds its authority and justification in the areas of reason and the senses; one is tempted to say, in the area of common sense. The reason behind, the compulsion in, any ethic is that it is the way things work. One should do as one ought to do because only by this can he get what he wants. It is as simple and as immutable as any law of chemistry or physics, and the results of deviation from the law are not punishment but consequences. If, in the desire to achieve a medicinal potion, but with a carelessness for, or ignorance of, the proper ingredients, we put together the makings of an explosive, we will be blown up. Equally, if we "live by the sword," we set into motion the same kind of certain processes which will bring about the conditions under which we will "die by the sword." Our way of living determines what the conditions of our living shall be, but it cannot affect the fact of our living. We can be frustrated in our apparent purposes; we cannot frustrate the real purpose of the life in us. The effect on us of a "sin" is that we must go back again and take the road we should have taken in the first place. Sometimes the orthodox teaching of damnation, utter destruction, an end to it all, might seem almost restful and merciful beside the truth that life never gives up on us, making us continue the endless process of trial and error, insisting that we must at last find and go down the right roads. "The Hound of Heaven" always pursues us for our perfecting.

But, if our assurance comes only from a belief in a competent power outside of ourselves who unendingly will hound us back from every straying, as a sheep dog nips the heels of strays, until blindly we happen upon each right direction, there is surely little joy in life for us. There stretches before us an eternity, dark and mysterious, through which we stumble, fearfully, with bleeding heels, in some purpose of which we have no comprehension nor in which we have any enthusiasm. However competent the universe is, if man sees himself as no more than a football in it, to be thrown and kicked to the goal, his life is more miserable than any horrors Dante pictured in Hell, the victims of which had at least the satisfaction of knowing they were there by their own initiative! Man needs to know a competence, to find a meaning, *within himself.* He knows he is a creature, *but* for his happiness and his sanity *he must know he is a creative creature* whose experiences and growth have significant effect on the time and eternity in which he lives. The assurance he finds must be an assurance in his own given nature. It is not enough to find a benevolent, competent God. He must know that he himself is of the very nature of that competent power; not flesh of that flesh, since flesh is of time and life is eternal; but spirit of that divine spirit.

This is the nature of the revolt of naturalistic humanism against supernatural theism. It is a revolt against belief in a God who, having made the world, steps back to let it run down or up as it chooses. Such a God, however much He may have had to do with the inception of existence, is of no consequence in its present state nor is He any hope for its future. The significant God that man needs must be found in himself. So the operative form of the question, "What's in it for me?" becomes *"What's in me?"*

In the universe of which we are a part, we are conscious of a government by law that moves the many forms of existence in a growing, creative pattern. We see this in the regular movements of the atoms and the planets, in the inevitability of cause and effect, in the wonder of evolving life. In this pattern of life, we see inert matter used in wondrous ways; we see dumb-animal life led by instincts seemingly wiser than man's intellect can match. We wonder at it all, and in our wonder are drawn to admit, as were our ancestors before us, the existence of a life purpose more comprehensive and more competent than any purpose we can devise. God rules the universe by his good will and great power; or, in more

wordly terms, there is a single reality which in many forms moves to its purpose. This is the conclusion which forced itself on the mind of primitive man, and with all our knowledge, we have not wrought any basic change in it. "Mana," the divine spirit, is in all, and is the reality of all, holding together all things and events.

What is the place of man? We seem to see him as an unordered part of an otherwise ordered universe. Orthodoxy, caught between the contradictory propositions of an almighty God and an unruly humankind of his making, felt compelled to postulate a freedom by which man, though created by God, can frustrate the purposes of God. Orthodoxy is so fascinated by the "problem of evil," that it ignores the more significant problem of good. It devotes itself to the unproductive question, "Where does all this evil come from in a world ruled by God?" almost to the exclusion of the creative question, "Where in the name of heaven does all the good come from in a world at the mercy of the sinful will of man?" Any sensible and functional faith must have as its foundation that man is a product of a universal purpose, was born and continues in it, and is himself, in his creativity, a true expression of the carrying out of that purpose. In what way is man free? He is shaped by his environment; he is a responsive part of the universe. This fact has caused us sorrow as we see ourselves limited by environmental faults; but it is the cause of great hope as we know ourselves to be responsive to educational opportunities. Man is not free, nor wants to be, of the shaping influences of his life. Even the education for which he hungers is a further limitation of "freedom," since as he learns the ways of life he is increasingly unable to go against them.

Like every other part of the universe, man is subject to cause and effect, and happily so. If only once in our experience a cause were to die without issue, or an effect were to rise out of a "virgin birth," never again could we walk the earth with assurance. This is not to say that we must know every cause or result; it is to say that as long as we may know that there is cause and effect, we have the foundation for our science and reason. To doubt it, or to suggest that we are in any degree free of it, would be to throw into hopeless confusion every body of knowledge in our civilization and deny the validity of any effort of man.

If free will means anything significant, it must mean that somehow, to some degree, man has the ability to act without regard for influences on him, without regard to laws of the universe to which other parts are subject. As such, freedom is an evil too awful to contemplate. If, out of the freedom of his will, man has chosen to do wrong (and reason tells us that he has done and does do wrong), there is no force in heaven or on earth that can move him from it. His case is hopeless. Even the religion which weeps over his plight is powerless to help him, since it has declared him beyond influence.

What awful ailment seemed to us to call for such a noxious remedy? The problem of evil, the fact that man does not do as he "ought" to do; in short, the dilemma of man's imperfection. The whole structure falls when we realize that it provides a solution for a dilemma which does not exist. Imperfection exists, but it is not a dilemma. Orthodoxy supposed a completed universe, a perfect, finished creation, and so finds a problem in the existence of imperfection in it. Reason, and any healthy faith that illumines it, must know that creation is moving on, not running down; that the universe is in process; that life did not begin in perfection but, in the working out of a perfect purpose, is still moving from chaos into order. What is more natural, then, than that there is imperfection, in the universe and in man? In *The Prophet*, Gibran speaks to this:

> Like the ocean is your god-self;
> It remains forever undefiled.
> And like the ether it lifts but the winged.
> Even like the sun is your god-self;
> It knows not the ways of the mole nor seeks it the holes of the serpent.
> But your god-self dwells not alone in your being.
> Much in you is still man, and much in you is not yet man
> But a shapeless pigmy that walks asleep in the mist searching for its own awakening.

We are not complacent about this imperfection, but it does not cause us a soul-sickness. We are creatively concerned. We can be better and we know it, so we move on to be better. Our hope is in the recognition of our imperfection. We can see good that we have not yet been able to attain. That is a foreshadowing, a promise, of what we shall be. It is the potential for good in us that enables us to know our own present sin.

It is sometimes said that if man's will is not free, he cannot be held properly responsible for his errors. Which is a way of saying that, even if man is not responsible, it is good that he should think he is. This is a persuasive argument. Ultimately all truth

THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE of the Council of Liberal Churches shown above met February 26 and 27, 1959. Staff members meeting with the committee were Dr. Ernest Kuebler, Alice M. Harrison, the Rev. Leon Hopper, Mrs. Lotta Hempel, Secretary. The above picture, taken on another occasion, shows the committee standing left to right: Dr. Merrill E. Bush, Chairman; Rev. J. Harold Hadley; Rev. Gordon B. McKeeman; Rev. Wayne Shuttee; Mrs. Edgar Wilson; Mrs. Randall Hilton; Dr. Ernest Kuebler, Director; Dr. Carleton M. Fisher; Prof. Kingsbury Badger.

Staff members: Alice M. Harrison, Rev. Edna P. Bruner, Frances W. Wood, Royal Cloyd, Mrs. Lotta Hempel, Secretary. It is a rare occasion when the entire professional staff is all together to have its picture taken. When the committee last met, Miss Bruner and Miss Wood were both in the field serving our church schools.

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in this area, or maybe in any area, must find its authority in its functional value. But, even here, belief in free will is neither reasonable nor helpful. Out of it come the concepts of blame and punishment, long known by us to be degrading and vain, useless in any reformatory endeavor. Man is not moved to change by despair, but by hope. Revolution never comes when conditions are at their worst, when all hope is gone; but, rather, when some amelioration has given promise of something better. The best criminologists see no value in the system of punishment for offences, and ask for a thoroughly reformatory system, in which the aim is the re-education of the prisoner to a socially acceptable way of thinking, and in which the sentence imposed is dependent on the individual need to this end. It is only one of the many ways in which our society assumes the educability, even the perfectibility, of persons, and looks to its own imperfect methods when the result is not good.

In our secular ways, we act as if we believe in the essential and durable goodness of man. In our religious ways can we still sing, as in Reginald Heber's *Missionary Hymn,* "every prospect pleases, and only man is vile?"

THE UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF AMERICA

Official Call

The 59th biennial session of the General Assembly of The Universalist Church of America will be held at Syracuse, New York, October 27 to November 1, 1959, for the purpose of hearing Reports, Election of Officers, and the transaction of any other business that may legally come before the Assembly.

— ESTHER A. RICHARDSON, *General Secretary*

LETTER FROM LINESVILLE

Henry F. Pommer

OUR Unitarian cousins appear much more frequently in literature than do we, but since they are so like us in all important ways, we can perhaps claim a little of the glory they have won. Unfortunately, we must then also share the censure visited upon them, and in this second connection, two passages from widely different sources emphasize the same problem:

> Calvinism stands, fear I, by pride and ignorance; and Unitarianism, as a sect, stands by the opposition of Calvinism.

> A Unitarian very earnestly disbelieves in almost everything that anybody else believes, and he has a very lively sustaining faith in he doesn't quite know what.

The first statement is by an historic Unitarian minister, Ralph Waldo Emerson (in his *Journal* for October 27, 1831); the second, by a fictional Unitarian minister, Weeks (in Chapter 25 of Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*). Both statements are given half-truth by a type of preaching from which Universalism as well as Unitarianism occasionally suffers. It is the type which attacks orthodoxy much more than it develops liberalism. Often it presents a gross or superficial picture of other religions, with the result that our superiority is asserted with undue ease, and we become better informed on the absurdities of other groups than on the merits of our own. Meanwhile outsiders come to believe that we are poor scholars and ungracious mockers, that we are *agin* a great many things, but *fur* very little.

This is not the place to enumerate our merits. Suffice it to say that they exist, and exist in sufficient numbers and complexity to tax the intellect and time of each liberal thinker. We do, of course, learn a great deal about ourselves by comparing and contrasting ourselves with others. And it is right that some pulpit time be given to the fallacies of Roman Catholicism and Calvinism — as well as of Unitarianism and Universalism. But even more, we need to explore the positive values of our own thought and the heroism of our own saints. We cannot assume that religious error will disappear if we say nothing about it, but neither can we put the best face on liberalism by attacking all else.

LIBERAL APPROACH TO THEOLOGY

(Continued from page 94)

of questions arise that will need answering. If, for example, Gordon Allport is right in his conviction that maturity comes in the thirties, what do we do on the immature level, when mature thinking is impossible? We may find that certain dynamic elements of faith such as love and the experience of wonder in the face of life's mysteries are vitally communicable on rather immature levels. We will most certainly find difficulty in maintaining continuity of thought content from infancy to maturity, and will, therefore, be forced to seek at least an appropriate sequence of related experiences. We cannot assume that the fully ripened fruit of our mature thinking is readily communicable to the young. But such questions have to be left for some other occasion. For the time being we must get a firmer grasp of the realities of religious experience. In this task I see a primary responsibility for the theologian and psychologist working co-operatively, although not an exclusive one. The teacher of the young, on the other hand, will play a primary role in determining when and how life's basic experiences and problems make their impact upon children at the various levels of maturity, and in identifying religiousness in the thought-feeling patterns of children.

YOU NEED NOT BE ALONE IN THE WORLD

The Universalist Church of the Larger Fellowship was created to serve isolated Universalists and other liberals. A far-flung parish, it serves members throughout North America and several overseas lands.

The CLF provides monthly pastoral letters, sermons, counseling, opportunities to make contact with liberals in your area, and, most importantly, helps you maintain contact with advancing Universalism.

Information about the Universalist Church of the Larger Fellowship and its many services may be obtained by simply filling out the form below.

The Universalist Church of the Larger Fellowship
16 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts

I wish to know more about the CLF. Please send me the facts.

(Name) .....

(Address) .....

(Town and State) .....

Methodists Have No Monopoly on This Sin

A LONG and relatively well-documented feature story on the plight of city (Protestant) churches appeared in the March 15 number of *The New York Times*. The story deals specifically with *Methodist* churches. It actually describes the plight of many if not most Protestant churches in the inner city areas of metropolitan America.

In the characteristic manner used by all reporters, the author, John Wicklein, opens his article with a sweeping generalization. Says Mr. Wicklein, "The Methodist Church, the largest Protestant denomination in the country, is dying out in the cities." The reasons ascribed to this are refusal to "accept as members any but whites of the upper middle class." If true, this is a most grievous sin. That it is and has been true many times and in many, many places, any Protestant churchman, who knows anything about churches in our inner cities, knows full well. Alas, that in so many churches officially and vocally devoted to the spiritual leadership of a Christ *who lived and died for all men,* so many men and women of lowly status can feel no welcome.

Every Protestant who reads this story should see *himself and his church* under conviction of the same monstrous sin. If you did not see this *New York Times* story, go to your library, get the *Times* for March 15 out of the files and read the story. Whenever the phrase "Methodist Church" appears in the negative part of the analysis of city churches, you substitute mentally the word Universalist or Unitarian for Methodist and you will be reading an accurate analysis of Universalist and Unitarian failures as well as Methodist failure. With varying degrees of accuracy, any denominational designation in the American Protestant roster can be fitted into this story of failure to minister to American city populations.

Methodists have no monopoly on the sin of race, class and economic discrimination which keeps thousands of men, women and children from the doors of Protestant city churches. Methodists do have the honest ethical courage and the sincere religious humility to face the facts of their failures.

Commenting on the situation, a Methodist official, Dr. Robert A. McKibben, director of the (Methodist) Board of Missions Department of City Work, said, "In the individual churches, the pastor may welcome to membership anyone he wants to regardless of race. No one can be turned away from worship at the altar of God." In spite of this, Dr. McKibben points out, "The Methodist Church is not strong in the cities because these churches are not ministering to their areas."

In Boston, Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Chicago, Methodist churchmen, both leaders and laity, are addressing themselves to the problem in courageous experimental manner. In the city of Boston, where five Methodist churches died in a recent ten-year period (and where Universalist and Unitarian churches have been dying for years), a most promising experiment in ministering to the people of their area is being carried out by the staff and lay-leadership of the larger parish made up of three former churches united under the administration of the Morgan Memorial.

Courage to experiment, good organization, and reasonably adequate financial backing are among the reasons for the success of this parish. They are, however, distinctly secondary reasons. The primary reason for the present growing success of the Boston South End parish is to be found in the faith in the supreme worth of persons under God and commitment to that faith by the ministers, both ecclesiastical and lay, of that parish.

Universalists and Unitarians have long been eloquent in verbalizing on the worth of persons and the rights of persons. We are woefully weak in the blessed art of loving persons where persons most need understanding love, that raucous, noisy, desperately lonely wilderness, the American city! We are greater sinners than our Orthodox brethren for we have not only failed as they have in cities; we have been happy in our failures, for to social snobbery, we have too often added the sin of intellectual pride.

We, the greater sinners then, salute our fellow sinners, the Methodists, with profound respect. From your courage and humility, we take renewed courage. From your noble attempt to minister to the needy city masses, we are inspired to deeper and more practical commitment to our gospel of the worth of persons under God!

OUR FIFTIETH STATE

COMMENTING on the admission of Hawaii as the fiftieth state, *The New York Times* said editorially, "If there is any one thing that the people of the United States need to say to mankind at this moment it is that we do not stand for any theory of racial superiority. This is what we did say when Congress, with overwhelming majorities in both houses and with the certainty of a Presidential signature, passed the Hawaiian statehood bill."

We most happily associate ourselves with both statements. A friend recently returned from over a year of residence abroad says that it is almost impossible to imagine how much the trouble at Little Rock, Arkansas, has cost us in the minds of people of other nations. We most assuredly do need to emphasize our historic American regard for the rights of all human beings. The admission of Hawaii with its multiracial population is in the truly American tradition of democratic equality under the law. Continental Americans, however, can take little credit for the good racial relations that have made a fine community of Hawaii. The descendants of the first Japanese, Filipinos and Chinese, together with the original Polynesian race, created their own virile melting pot. The Chinese-American president of the last territorial Senate, Herbert K. H. Lee, commenting on his people at the statehood celebration, said, "God made us His children of destiny to spread the brotherhood of man."

For this peaceful, pacific brotherhood, we can be thankful and of it, we may be proud. To celebrate our new Hawaiian state, all of us, North and South, had best rededicate ourselves to the improvement of human relations on this continent.

SPEAKING OF THE UNIFIED APPEAL

ABOUT this time every year when three-quarters of the fiscal year of the Universalist Church has run out, we begin to wonder how the Unified Appeal is prospering. The editor of this journal has enough worries serving the denomination in his own specialized field so that he cannot help the Unified Appeal very much. When we suddenly realize every spring, however, that there are only three months to go before the fiscal year ends on June 30, we get uneasy. When this happened to us the other day, we went down the hall and got a memo from June Burns in the Unified Appeal office. From the figures in front of us, it appears that the amount of money raised in mid-March of this year is a little more than the amount in mid-March last year. This fact indicates to us that while the response to the Appeal has not decreased recently, the old Universalist disease of procrastination is still with us.

We are confident that Universalists are on the increase in their giving habits. We believe that when the columns are all totalled after the books are closed, the seventy-six thousand dollars asked for by the Unified Appeal will be raised. What we would like to urge upon our friends, good Universalists everywhere, is that you get that increased contribution to the Unified Appeal to 16 Beacon Street at the earliest possible moment. Delaying payment just means sleepless nights for your treasurer, assistant treasurer, and the hard-working director of the Unified Appeal, Mr. Dixon.

We keep the faith only as we spread the faith. We spread the faith only as we support the faith. So, support your Unified Appeal. Give to your Unified Appeal. Give generously and give NOW!

TOOLS FOR CHURCHMANSHIP

THE Universalist Four-Year Program of Advance, now in its second year, is designed to stimulate advance in our local parishes. Its basic interest is people and our ministry to people. To this end, your national staff has brought out a series of practical booklets on various aspects of churchmanship.

Since the beginning of the program in 1957, when the first over-all prospectus of the program was brought out, the Advance booklets have dealt with the working areas of liberal churches. Two of these have been produced by the staff of the Division of Education of the Council of Liberal Churches. Two booklets are available in the field of public relations: the first, a manual on *Newspaper Display Advertising*, prepared by Robert Wolley; the second, a primer on *Increasing Church Membership* by Dana E. Klotzle. LeRoi Dixon has prepared a manual on *Denominational Fund Raising* which gives step-by-step directions for parish financial canvass.

These booklets are useful tools, not only for minister, but also for that blessed, loyal and active lay-segment of every parish which provides the man and woman power for the committees without which no minister alive could run a parish, to say nothing of increasing its membership. The *Advance* booklets are available at 16 Beacon Street for twenty cents a single copy and ten cents in quantities of ten or more.

Poets in Epitome

IX. Theodore Roethke

Llewellyn Jones

WHEN Alfred Lord Tennyson plucked the flower from the crannied wall and assured it that if he knew it through and through he would know what God and man were, the flower stood mute and Lord Tennyson went to his grave as ignorant about man and God as Charles Darwin or John Doe.

The poets of today are more modest and do not ask the smaller creatures to give beyond their means. So that the answers they receive, if less cosmic than of old, are more valid, being personal and therapeutic, which is not to deny that they may also be cosmic by implication. Not all poets do, of course, question the smaller creatures. The poetry of man, of society with a "logical" side, to use John Crowe Ransom's term, or the "moral" poetry written and defended by Yvor Winters is undoubtedly more popular. Nonetheless what we may inadequately call "therapeutic" poetry, relying heavily on symbolism and perhaps more difficult to apprehend, often makes a much weightier impact on those whose sensibilities respond to it.

Notable among poets of this type is Theodore Roethke, whose *Collected Verse: Words for the Wind* has recently been published by Doubleday. Mr. Roethke is a Michigan man now teaching at the University of Washington. His books have brought him a number of national awards including a Pulitzer prize.

To show as quickly as possible Mr. Roethke's sheer technical competence, let me quote two lines from the group *Love Poems:*

> She lilts a low soft language, and I hear
> Down long sea-chambers of the inner ear.

Hearing the murmur of the far-off sea as you hold a shell to your ear is by this time a fairly well-worn cliché. But to reverse the cliché is to replace a conjuring trick by a miracle.

Mr. Roethke's idiosyncratic note, however, is struck in the poems which I have clumsily termed "therapeutic," their themes the losses, the agonies, the overcomings incident to growth from infancy on. "Unique" is not a word to be used lightly, but it might be a safe guess to say that the symbolism through which Mr. Roethke covers this ground is, certainly on the scale on which he employs it, unique in our poetry. Early in his life, the poet's family ran a commercial greenhouse, and the small child had the run of the place. A greenhouse is the organic world on a small scale — its horror as well as its triumphing life. Here the child's love as well as his horror found its symbols. From the section entitled, *The Lost Son,* here is *Forcing House:*

> Vines tougher than wrists
> And rubbery shoots,
> Scums, mildews, smuts along stems,
> Great cannas or delicate cyclamen tips,—
> All pulse with the knocking pipes
> That drip and sweat,
> Sweat and drip,
> Swelling the roots with steam and stench,
> Shooting up lime and dung and dried bones,—
> Fifty summers in motion at once,
> As the heat billows from pipes and pots.

Without the penultimate line that would be a fine piece of brutally realistic descriptive verse, but "Fifty summers in motion at once" is a piece of sheer revelation: with that line echoing in your mind, you will never again speak glibly about "the present."

Recently, in writing of William Carlos Williams, I contrasted poems with built-in "explanations" and those others which simply give the symbol and trust the reader to supply his own "logic." Mr. Roethke has written a number of short childhood poems in this latter manner. These tend to remind us of those fragmentary childhood memories which the Freudians call "screen memories": memories which camouflage episodes otherwise repressed. Here is an example:

> Wilkie will yellow I sang.
> Her eyes went kissing away
> It was and it wasn't her there
> I sang I sang all day.

But I hope the reader will note that I did not state

VETERAN SERVICE COMMITTEE WORKERS RETURN FROM GERMANY — Dr. and Mrs. Gustav H. Ulrich arrived in Boston March 10, 1959, after nine months of fieldwork for the Universalist Service Committee in co-operation with the German social agency, Arbeiter Wohlfahrt. The Ulrichs worked both in Berlin and in the city of Ulm. For several months, Dr. Ulrich was counselor at the Berlin-Kladow Refugee Center for youth refugees and Mrs. Ulrich worked with small children. The latter third of their time was spent at the House of Youth in the old Wilhelmsburg at Ulm in Southern Germany. Dr. Ulrich worked with the House of Youth staff and Mrs. Ulrich worked with the leaders of the kindergarten containing eighty-three, three- to five-year-olds.

This is Dr. Ulrich's fourth tour of duty in Germany with the Universalist Service Committee. It is hoped that Dr. and Mrs. Ulrich will be able to make a speaking tour soon under the auspices of the Service Committee.

positively that these were records of screen memories. Perhaps the only safe assertion to make would be that they are the kind of small child poem which only parents can understand. One more, a very explicit one, is an extraordinarily poignant example of the often horrible abyss between "innocence" and adult values:

> I was sad for a fish.
> Don't hit him on the boat, I said.
> Look at him puff. He's trying to talk.
> Papa threw him back.

Bridging the abyss is a process never to be completed. Recalling childhood, but writing from the viewpoint of the grown man, Mr. Roethke in *Slug* writes a poem that recalls the American Indian's apologies to the animal he must kill:

> How I loved one like you when I was little! —
> With his stripes of silver and his small house upon his back,
> Making a slow journey around the well-curb. . . .

But the slug of this poem has got mixed up with Mr. Roethke's lawn-mower, thus compelling an innocent gardener to become a murderer.

However, we do not describe a war or a game or a journey in terms of its casualties alone, and Mr. Roethke can look at whole configurations as well as at details. Here from *The Shape of the Fire* is an intensely lyrical invocation:

> Morning-fair, follow me further back
> Into that minnowy world of weeds and ditches,
> When the herons floated high over the white houses,
> And the little crabs slipped into silvery craters.
> When the sun for me glinted the sides of a sand grain
> And my intent stretched over the buds at their first trembling.

I assume that the "intent" of the last line is synonymous with "intention" in the technical, religious sense. That the intent is a genuine one and not sentimentality is vouched for, so to speak, by the loyalty to his childhood, and to its early recognition of the fact that life may end in beauty but does not begin there, which we find expressed in *The Root Cellar:*

> Leaf-mould, manure, lime, piled against slippery planks,
> Nothing would give up life:
> Even the dirt kept breathing a small breath.

Reactions Of Our Readers

FINDS MERGER IN KEEPING WITH HIS HERITAGE

To the Editor:

In reply to both *Leader* correspondents and those in our local churches and fellowships who express a desire to know where denominational staff persons stand on the question of merger, I should like to make my personal position clear.

Until this past October 1, I served as a member of the Joint Merger Commission and previously I was a member of the Joint Interim Commission. I resigned the JMC upon becoming director of Extension for The Universalist Church of America. I have been asked frequently why I left a successful and rapidly growing church to take on such a duty when the prospects of prolonged employment were most doubtful. I don't suppose that to answer simply "because I was asked to serve my denomination" seems very dramatic, but that's all there is to it.

I believe in merger between the UCA and the AUA, and no less because of the realignment of denominational staff which will follow. That my present position on the UCA staff will be for a brief duration should merger be voted, is an item of which I am well aware. I have no illusions, although I appreciate the concern some folks have expressed.

To those who question my "right" both to assume a denominational position and to express favorable sentiments and convictions in behalf of merger, I can only state that I believe merger to be in the best interests of liberal religion, an intelligent extension of Universalism.

Over one hundred and twenty-five years ago, my ancestors founded the First Universalist Church in Medford. I am a direct descendant of William Brewster. My grandfather married a Unitarian whose ancestry includes those sixteenth-century liberals who fled to Leyden, Holland. Religious liberalism is a cherished heritage of which I am continually proud and conscious. It is a heritage I wish to maintain and whose future I hope to help assure.

I am, however, well aware that such a heritage amounts to little in our democracy where what you are counts for more than what your family lines have been. I mention it because I am conscious of it, and I have faithfully considered the religion entrusted to me.

The creeds of the Pilgrims, the autocracy of Brewster, the theology of the nineteenth - century Universalists in Medford, none of this, not even the faiths of my parents, is mine. I think, however, that these were growing, maturing people and that given our understandings they would no more despair of my extension of their seed than I shall despair of the new thoughts of my children. It is my honest conviction that merger is in keeping with my heritage.

But more, merger can more satisfactorily provide the vehicle for the fulfillment of our present liberal faith. There are no significant contemporary differences between Unitarianism and Universalism, save the human differences which are present even in identical twins. I have studied Unitarianism carefully and once served as an assistant in a Unitarian parish. There are moments of apprehension, to be sure, but such moments usually result from the action of some individual or other and not from some imagined barrier to merger.

—Robert S. Wolley
Boston, Mass.

RE MERGER

To the Editor:

The merger could be good because we need each other. Unitarianism needs some (not all) of Universalism's human warmth toward persons. Universalism needs some (not all) of Unitarianism's rationale.

The merger will be good if we forget our petty "preservations" and move as a creative faith must move toward the "new." After all, the only meaning in the word "creative" is movement toward the "new."

The merger can be good if our attitudes are positive, urgent, toward man's ever-expanding destiny, guided by creations — God's cosmic enterprise.

— John E. Wood
Watertown, N. Y.

ON THE INDIANA RECOMMENDATION

To the Editor:

A letter for the *Leader*. In the last minister's packet, there appeared a Recommendation passed by the Indiana Universalist Convention, October 18, 1958. At first sight, I was ready to compliment the Convention on its forthright stand. That is, when I read, "Recommended, that this Convention notify The Universalist Church of America that it stands ready to effect a corporate merger with The Universalist Church of America. . . ." However, continuing my reading, I discovered that the good people of Indiana do not really intend to do anything at all. Like the man who sought to be the first man on earth to work wholeheartedly for peace . . . provided everyone else was doing the same thing, these people then inform us, ". . . whenever all other Universalist State Conventions agree to do likewise;"

Such dynamic leadership from Indiana Universalists cannot but lead us all on an advance program that will carry us onward and upward and then downward and backward.

I appeal to the Universalists of Indiana to take off the double talk. Either stand up and be counted for a reorganization that will give The Universalist Church of America the flexibility it needs for real nation-wide growth or make clear a determination to maintain the present State Convention.

— David H. MacPherson
Silver Spring, Maryland

KEEP THE IN-FIGHTING OUT

To the Editor:

Thank God for the Unitarians! Long may their tribe prosper! Without them we would but have to blame ourselves for all the noxious ideas in the area of religious liberalism. Theism — it's those blackguard Unitarians who are perpetuating that nonsense. Humanism — kept alive and noisesome by those *other* folk.

It is convenient and comforting to have those "other people" around. Without them we would have to turn an introspective eye to ourselves and see within the diversity that unorthodoxy breeds. Let's keep it safe — let's keep it proper — let's keep our infighting directed outward. Let's keep the Unitarians alive — our scapegoat and whipping boy for the ideas and ideals we don't individually cherish. It makes our meetings so much more pleasant, our conferences so much more congenial, our vitality so much more sterile. With tongue in cheek, I pen these words, but with a thought for those who see not through this obscure attempt at humorous insight, I'm saying that I cast my vote for unequivocal merger.

— RICHARD M. WOODMAN
Binghamton, N. Y.

OPPOSED TO MERGER

To the Editor:

Like Dr. Greenway and Dr. Adams, I have been hesitant about putting my thoughts about merger on paper. If you do not like this expression, you are free to put it in file 13. But here is my thinking on the subject.

Also, like Harmon Gehr, I am a "birthright Universalist." In fact, my birthright goes back four generations. Universalist thinking is, therefore, "bred in my bones."

This question of merger with the Unitarians is a serious one with me. Had it been proposed twenty years ago I am sure I would have been more in favor of it than I am now. My father, the Rev. T. C. Druley, and a Unitarian minister, the Rev. E. A. Coil, were very good friends. The Unitarian Church in Marietta, Ohio, where Mr. Coil was minister, had, in the early 1900s, members who had been Universalists in other parts of the county of which Marietta is the largest community. My father served those county Universalist churches. There was a very close cooperation between the two denominations as well as the ministers.

Since then, as a minister in my own right, I have been slapped down by the Unitarians. I have tried to be cooperative with the Unitarian Fellowship which was formed a few years ago in the area where I serve as a Universalist minister. But, as so many others have pointed out, the cooperation was a one-sided affair. True, my church is a small one with no immediate prospect of becoming any larger. Therefore, it would seem advisable for our two groups to unite. Any move I have made has been met with the remark, "We'll see." Whatever suggestions have come from them have been in the nature of, "We'll take over even though you do have the church facilities. We will manage everything to suit ourselves." To that, our few church members will not agree.

A few years ago, I carried my concern to the State and National levels. Even there, we were told by the Unitarians that the objections to Unitarian tactics were not valid. In other words, again we were slapped down by the Unitarians.

This is an experience I do not relish. It convinces me that I am not at all interested in Merger. The members of the church I serve, even though few in number, feel as I do. We will vote against Merger. We are not averse to continuation of the present plan.

— HARRIET E. DRULEY
Springfield, Ohio

FOR MERGER

To the Editor:

I love the Universalist Church into which I came by conviction instead of inheriting fellowship by birth. And it is because I love the Universalist Church that I believe in organic merger with the Unitarians. I have made a careful and objective study of all phases of merger and I cannot conceivably see how this merger can harm either body, but will enhance it if entered into by both churches in the spirit of amity and determination to make it work.

It pains me to say that the arguments from the Universalist opposition to date strike me as arising either from academic abstractions, from selfish considerations, or sentimental emotion. None of these are a rational basis for arguing against merger. I think the most sensible statement yet in favor of merger is that of Dr. Stanley Manning, who has written, "I know we cannot be submerged or swallowed without our consent. The spirit and message of Universalism will not be lost in a merger unless we lose it." I agree and sincerely believe that a merger will accentuate the historic greatness of both churches and will make their modern message *which is the same* more strongly heard and felt than is now the case with our separate efforts.

— JOSEPH LADD SULLIVAN
Albion, New York

HOSEA BALLOU AND HIS UNITARIAN CONTEMPORARIES

To the Editor:

The ultimate has been reached in merger discussion: the shade of Hosea Ballou has been invoked. In the March *Leader,* Mrs. Harold J. Adams said, "What would Hosea Ballou do if he were asked to vote on the merger?" Fortunately, we do not need to disturb his rest. There is a record available to us of how he did "vote."

In *Select Sermons,* published in 1854, there was printed a sermon by Ballou about the Unitarians, on the text, "Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee." The "somewhat" that he has against them is that they do not acknowledge universal salvation, but rather avoid it and even deny it. Ballou is sometimes almost bitter in his regret that, being so close, they are yet so far away. Not a little of his criticism of the Unitarians is because their influence on Universalists was to draw them away from the unique Universalist message. In Ballou's *Voice to Universalists,* published in 1849, he is very concerned about Universalists who "have been open advocates of divine truth" (a propaganda term for belief in universal salvation) and now "have, in some measure, yielded to the popular influence exerted to dissuade them from its defense in hope of amalgamating with such as are so very liberal as to define no belief whether the will of our heavenly Father in men's final salvation will be accomplished or not." He identifies these nameless "such" unmistakably by quoting the phrase they adopt, "Upward and onward" (sic).

In the same volume, in an article entitled *Advice to Young Men Who Design to Enter the Ministry,* Ballou wrote, "It is to be feared that some, who profess Universalism, and are engaged in the ministry, are desirous of rendering their labors acceptable to our brethren of the Unitarian denomination, by adopting such like opinions,

and holding them forth in public. By doing so, they seem to indicate that their sympathies are rather with the Unitarians than with those Universalists who preach no other sentiments to their congregations than such as the Scriptures teach."

I would never have thought of applying to Father Ballou for a postmortem answer to our dilemma, but as long as his name has been brought up, let us keep the record straight. Ballou was unitarian; he was not, and had no wish to be, Unitarian. He wanted no union with them on any other basis than their acknowledgment of their belief in universal salvation.

Yours for letting the dead rest in peace,

— ALBERT F. ZIEGLER

Melrose, Mass.

THE EDITOR IS GUILTY

To the Editor:

Would you please consider the following "letter" for your section — Letters to the Editor? By way of explanation I should like to say that this is submitted in the spirit of friendliness and as a pointed way of suggesting a long felt need.

Dear Criterius:

To be quoted, or nearly so, in the Plumb Line or any other article should be deemed an honor. But, I would think it only proper when seeking or selecting a name to use within or after one's own writing, that one would first use his own.

I am careful to remind editors that it is not Working, but Workeen; two e's, if you *pleese*. But in spelling Criterius, I am in doubt. Is it one or two Z's?

Fraternally,

— Melvin C. Van de Workeen

P.S. That is my name, pen or otherwise.

I think the humor meant will be shared. With tongue in cheek, I say I write to you thusly because I know not where to address Criterius.

— MELVIN C. VAN de WORKEEN

Boston, Mass.

Editor's Note: Misspelling a name is a major journalistic crime. We regret the error and must say *ours* is the guilt. — E.H.L.

INSTALLATIONS

JAMES DENNIS HUNT was installed as minister of the First Universalist Church, Cortland, N. Y., Sunday evening, February 8, 1959.

Following the opening words of welcome by Moderator Robert Grummons, the Rev. Howard E. Quirk, associate minister of the First Presbyterian Church, brought greetings from the community. A message from the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca was read by Mrs. W. C. Muenscher. Dr. Philip R. Giles, General Superintendent, sent a message from The Universalist Church of America. The Rev. Howard B. Gilman, State Superintendent, brought greetings from the N. Y. State Convention of Universalists. The Occasional Sermon was preached by Professor Robert L. Cope of St. Lawrence University.

Mr. Hunt was installed by Moderator Robert Grummons and the congregation.

The Charge to the Minister was given by the Rev. Paul E. Killinger of the Unitarian Fellowship of Bloomington, Indiana. The Charge to the Congregation was given by the Rev. Richard M. Woodman, minister of the First Universalist Church of Binghamton.

The Benediction was given by the Rev. James D. Hunt.

ALBERT FREDERICK ZIEGLER was installed as minister of the First Universalist Church of Melrose, Massachusetts, Sunday evening, February 15, 1959.

The Invocation was offered by Dr. Robert L'H. Miller, former minister of the Church. Dr. Miller also read the Scripture. The Installation Sermon was preached by Dr. Emerson Hugh Lalone.

The Rev. Frederick L. Harrison, superintendent of Massachusetts Universalist Churches, presented the candidate for installation. The Act of Installation was led by Mr. Leon Johnson, president of the First Universalist Church. Both the Congregation and Mr. Ziegler responded to the leader's Call for Dedication. The Installation Prayer was offered by the Rev. Frederick L. Harrison.

The Charge to the Minister was given by Dr. Miller and the Charge to the Congregation was given by the minister emeritus, the Rev. Leslie C. Nichols. The Rev. Leonard Pillsbury, president of the Melrose Ministers' Association, extended a welcome from the churches of Melrose to the new minister.

The Benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Albert Frederick Ziegler.

An informal reception for Mr. and Mrs. Ziegler was held in the Ladies' parlor of the church following the service.

RAYMOND M. SCOTT was installed as minister of the Universalist Church of the Messiah, Fort Plain, N. Y., Sunday evening, February 15, 1959. The Rev. Burchard A. Royce of Amsterdam, N. Y., presided, gave the Call to Worship and offered the Invocation. The Responsive Reading was also led by Mr. Royce.

Dr. Philip R. Giles, General Superintendent, preached the Installation Sermon.

The Act of Installation was led by Mr. Daniel Martin, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Church. The Installation Prayer was offered by the Rev. Robert Sterling, president of the N. Y. State Universalist Ministers' Association. The Rev. Howard B. Gilman, State Superintendent, gave the Charge to the Minister and the Congregation.

A Welcome to the Community was extended to Mr. Scott by the Rev. Gordon Alexander, minister of the Reformed Church, Fort Plain, N. Y.

The Benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Raymond M. Scott.

CONNECTICUT UNIVERSALIST CONVENTION

Official Notice

Notice is hereby given that the 127th annual meeting of the Connecticut Universalist Convention will be held on Saturday, May 23, 1959, beginning at 9:30 o'clock in the morning, at the First Universalist Church, 608 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut, for the purpose of hearing annual reports, the election of officers and the transaction of other business.

— WILLIAM E. GARDNER
Secretary

March 10, 1959

NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSALIST WOMEN

Mrs. Harvey Mitchell, President, North Carolina A.U.W.

If you were traveling south and passed through eastern North Carolina, you would find The Association of Universalist Women of North Carolina established in five of the six Universalist churches: Red Hill, Clinton, Outlaw's Bridge, Kinston, and Rocky Mount. We are comparatively young as an organized Association of Universalist Women. Rocky Mount just celebrated its golden anniversary, but some of us have some years to go to match them.

We support the state A.U.W. on a quota basis which is figured according to a group's membership. The *Bulletin,* the Elliott P. Joslin and Clara Barton Birthplace Camps receive the greatest support with various national U.C.A. Service Committee's requests answered as best we can. The women are now primarily engaged in their individual church problems. North Carolina is now without subsistence from any national Universalist organization and is proudly mastering its problems.

The state Universalist institute property located at Shelter Neck, close to the eastern seaboard near Burgau, North Carolina, is one of the largest and most prized projects. Once a private school with a chapel and two large buildings now used for dormitories, it was in a very sorry state of repair when taken over by the North Carolina State Universalist Convention. Since then it has been completely renovated with all churches giving generously of their time and labor. We of the A.U.W. have put considerable time and money into making it a comfortable and enjoyable place for our summer institute as well as the state L.R.Y. institute and other church meetings. This year the A.U.W. Institute will meet June 9-12. Our usual attendance is about thirty women. We learn, we teach, we worship, and we work — everyone has a relaxing, satisfying time.

It is also our custom to have at least two and at the most four institute days during the time between summer institutes. At that time, we meet at one of the churches for an informative program. An outside speaker is usually invited. Some of the past year's programs have been: United Nations' Day, North Carolina's Contribution to the Fine Arts, Mental Health, and most recently, an exchange of ideas of organization and service with the Unitarian Women of Charlotte, N. C. The latter was to acquaint us with their group (national and local) during this period when merger is being discussed.

The North Carolina A.U.W. Constitution, which was out of date, was recently revised by a group of women headed by Mrs. E. P. Blanchard, a national board trustee and a member of the Red Hill A.U.W. Revisions included changing the fiscal year so it now coincides with the national A.U.W. and changing the time of the Annual Convention to the Tuesday after the third Sunday in June instead of being held in conjunction with the State Church Convention in October in order that both groups may have more time and the women can take a more active part in the Church Convention.

The North Carolina A.U.W. executive board has seven officers and meets at midyear. There is a state program committee to plan all institute days and the summer institute, a service committee and a finance committee. Mrs. Harvey Mitchell, of Jacksonville and the Kinston Church, is the state president. We are proud she has also been selected as president of the national A.U.W. State Presidents' Council.

Financially, we operate on an austerity budget. Out of a budget of about $600, $250 is sent to the national A.U.W. treasurer. However, we try to help the state L.R.Y. both with their institute and sending members to various meetings or Ferry Beach. Each local group is doing as much as possible to help its local church, carrying on the original purpose of the national Universalist women's organization.

As a state Association, we do not partake in many projects, but each A.U.W. member has many personal projects in her community such as Red Cross, welfare of the aged, Negro help, and hospital work.

Our goals are simple: we are looking forward to the local church's growth and are doing as much as possible to help in this direction. We will support the national A.U.W. and its projects as best we can and certainly hope to be informed members of our communities. With the South disturbed by racial unrest, we are doing what we can for better understanding of the problem.

We welcome visitors so, if you are coming our way, do visit us.

— Erleen S. Sparbel,
Program Chairman,
A.U.W. of N. C.

Worship Service
Shelter Neck, N. C.

News of Churches and Church People

LIBERAL RELIGIOUS YOUTH APPOINTS ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Frank A. Kelly, Manchester, N. H.

Orloff W. Miller

The Rev. Orloff W. Miller, Francestown, New Hampshire, was appointed LRY Associate Director at the recent meetings of the LRY Executive Committee in Lynn, Massachusetts. Mr. Miller will assume full-time duties at 16 Beacon Street on June 1, and will be on hand during the AUA May Meetings.

Mr. Miller is presently serving the Federated Church of Francestown, New Hampshire (Unitarian-Congregational), where he has been since January, 1956. The son of a Methodist parson, his present primary fellowship is with the Northeast Ohio Annual Conference of the Methodist Church and he is in "Affiliated Fellowship" with the American Unitarian Association.

A graduate of Mount Union College (A.B., 1953) and Boston University (S.T.B., 1956), he is now a Ph.D. candidate (Sociology and Social Ethics) at Boston University, having completed almost one-half of his course work.

At twenty-seven, Orloff is married to the former Mary Jane Williams and has two children, Rikki, 3, and Tanya, 1 year. His most recent church work includes a summer position with the East Harlem Protestant Parish, New York (1955), and minister of the Junior Church and advisor to the Student Group at the Harvard Congregational Church (Brookline, Mass., 1954-55). He has been both president and vice-president of the Monadnock Community Council of Churches.

In Orloff Miller, we believe that LRY has found a man of serious interests and deep liberal religious convictions — one who will help us achieve the purposes of our organization with his ability to be sympathetic to the development of new and fresh ideas, challenging the common and affirming the best in our Unitarian-Universalist youth.

WANTED: A DESIGN FOR A CHAPEL REREDOS

The Faculty of The Theological School at St. Lawrence University solicits the interest of qualified artists in the liberal church in creating a design for a mosaic marble reredos to complete Hale Memorial Chapel. It is suggested that the Judaeo-Christian religious tradition be treated imaginatively in association with symbols of other world religions so that man's universal quest for religious meanings may be exemplified in the reredos. This reredos panel will provide a focal point for the school and will symbolize visually the school's role in preparing Universalists, Unitarians, and other liberals to foster a religiousness which is inclusive and at the same time takes seriously all man's searching and finding.

While the Faculty is hopeful that an artist from the liberal fellowship may submit the acceptable design, they welcome designs from various other sources. The final design must be approved by the Board of Trustees of The Theological School.

The reredos space is approximately six feet wide and twelve feet high.

Further details may be obtained by addressing The Chapel Design Committee, The Theological School, St. Lawrence University, Canton, N. Y.

C.L.C. TO BROADCAST NEW "FAITH IN ACTION" SERIES

The Council of Liberal Churches (Universalist-Unitarian) is sponsoring a new "Faith In Action" series of broadcasts over the National Broadcasting Corporation network Sunday mornings from 8:15 to 8:30 E.S.T., April 5, 12 and 19.

April 5. *The Idea of a Whole Person.* Participants: Dr. and Mrs. Harry A. Overstreet, authors, lecturers, adult educators. Instead of looking at the pathology of mental illness, the emphasis in this program will be on the characteristics of healthy, effective people. Dr. and Mrs. Overstreet have written and spoken extensively on this subject and will conduct one of their "conversations."

April 12. *Facing the Crises of Life.* Participants: The Rev. Donald Harrington, Minister of the Community Church of New York City. The Rev. J. Raymond Baughan, Minister of the Universalist Church of Arlington, Massachusetts. Everybody meets emotional stresses and challenges with relation to childhood and growing up, love and marriage, vocational success or failure, sickness, aging and death. Very frequently people under emotional stress turn to their churches and ministers for help. What resources can religion offer to help people meet these normal crises of life? This will be a conversation between two ministers on the way in which they are able to use psychiatric insights in their parish counseling.

April 19. *What Religion and Psychiatry Can Do Together.* Participants: Dr. Earl A. Loomis, Jr., Director, Program in Psychiatry and Religion, Union Theological Seminary. Dr. Harry C. Meserve, Unitarian Minister. This program will be a conversation attempting to describe and analyze the areas in which ministers and psychiatrists can cooperate in promoting mental health. It will stress the distinct contributions which religion and psychiatry can make separately and the advantages which can come about when they understand one another and work cooperatively together.

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WANTED IN OHIO

Ohio Universalists are on the march. Once dormant churches have been revitalized and are experiencing vigorous growth. New fellowships have been organized and are expanding into churches. The future will bring more of the same if all Universalists cooperate. You can help by sending information about scattered Universalists in Ohio to the Rev. George J. Spencer, 5512 Eastwood Drive, Cincinnati 27, Ohio. There is a particular need for names and addresses of Universalists living in the Mansfield, Greenville and Wilmington areas.

OBITUARY

ROGER D. BOSWORTH

Dr. Roger D. Bosworth, Universalist minister and lecturer, died in the hospital at Cherokee, Iowa, February 14, 1959, after a brief illness. Dr. Bosworth had been in ill health for several years.

Roger Bosworth was born in Moville, Iowa, in 1912. He was educated in local schools and later received his Bachelor of Arts degree at Morningside College and Doctor of Theology degree from Illiff School of Theology, Denver, Colorado. In all, Dr. Bosworth served thirteen years in the Universalist parish ministry, five years in Denver, five years in Atlanta, Georgia, and three years in Columbus, Ohio. From 1945 to 1947, he was director of Universalist Youth Work with offices in Boston, Massachusetts.

Dr. Bosworth married Alice Lowe in 1949. He is survived by Mrs. Bosworth and two sons, Edwin and William of Sioux City, Iowa.

Funeral services were held Monday afternoon, February 16, in the Federated Church of Moville. The Rev. William Crossley, minister of the Church, and the Rev. Carl Whittier of the First Unitarian Church of Sioux City, officiated.

PASTORAL CHANGES

The Rev. Donald Hinckley of West Paris, Maine, has accepted a call to become minister of the First Universalist Church, Worcester, Mass.

The Rev. Walter Royal Jones, minister of the First Universalist Church, Gloucester, Massachusetts, has assumed pastoral charge of the Universalist Church of Essex, in addition to his duties as minister of the Gloucester Church.

The Rev. Herbert G. Weeks, since 1950, minister of the Universalist Church in Milford, Massachusetts, has accepted a call to become minister of the First Universalist Church of North Adams.

Charles Gaines became the minister of the First Universalist Church, Framingham, Mass., February 1, 1959.

The Rev. Alan F. Sawyer, Jr. has left the First Universalist Church, Girard, Pennsylvania, to become the minister of the First Universalist Church of Monson, Massachusetts.

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JOEL W. REYNOLDS, *Treasurer*

Many wish not so much to be virtuous as to seem to be. — Cicero

PROPOSED CHANGES IN BYLAWS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSALIST WOMEN

Article IV, Section 1

Now reads — The officers of this Association shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, and a Treasurer. These officers with six Trustees and a Director for each district of the State, shall constitute an Executive Board. This Executive Board shall determine the Districts.

Change to — The officers of this Association shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer, four Trustees, and a Director for each district of the state. These officers shall constitute the Executive Board of the Association. The Executive Board shall determine the districts of the state.

Article IV, Section 2

Now reads — The Officers, Trustees, and District Directors shall be elected by ballot at the annual meeting, and shall hold their offices until others are chosen and qualified in their stead. In all elections a majority of the members present and voting shall be required to elect.

Change to — The officers shall be elected for a two-year term by ballot at the annual meeting and shall hold their offices until others are chosen and qualified in their stead. In all elections a majority of the members present and voting shall be required to elect. Vacancies in any office shall be filled by the Executive Board.

Article IV, Section 3

Now reads — The President, Vice-President and Secretaries shall be eligible to the same office but four consecutive years. The Treasurer shall be eligible for ten consecutive years. Two Trustees shall be elected annually to hold office for three consecutive years only. District Directors shall not serve longer than four years.

Change to — No officer but the Treasurer shall be eligible for more than one consecutive re-election to the same office. The Treasurer shall be eligible for four consecutive re-elections.

Article V, Section 4

Now reads — Due notice of the annual meeting of the Association shall be given in the April issue of the Christian Leader.

Change to — Due notice of the annual meeting of the Association shall be given in the April issue of The Universalist Leader.

Article VII, Section 7 (d)

Now reads — They (the Executive Board) shall have power to fill all vacancies in the offices of the Association until the next annual meeting.

Delete this section — (This is now taken care of in the new Article IV, Section 2.)

Article VII, Section 7 (e)

Now reads — Each department chairman shall submit an annual report to the President.

Change — This would now become Article VII, Section 7 (d).

Article VII, Section 7 (f)

Now reads — Seven members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

Change to — Six members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. Also, this would now become Article VII, Section 7 (e).

Article VIII, Section 1

Now reads — The Committee on Nominations shall consist of two members of the Executive Board and three other members of the Association, and shall be appointed in January previous to the annual meeting. They shall report names of members for President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Trustees and District Directors. They shall prepare a printed ballot to be used at the annual meeting.

Change to — The Committee on Nominations shall consist of two members of the Executive Board and three other members of the Association, and shall be appointed in January previous to the annual meeting. They shall report names for vacant offices or names for re-election. They shall prepare a printed ballot to be used at the annual meeting.

Article VIII, Section 5

Now reads — The Committee on Resolutions shall express the thanks of the Association for all favors received.

Change — Delete this section.

Article IX, Section 1

Now reads — Each group shall be expected to pay into the State Treasury its proportionate share to meet the annual budget, said sum to be apportioned by the Treasurer, and approved by the Finance Committee. Each group shall be free to make its own plan of work. But such work shall always be in harmony with the program of this Association as stated in Article II of the By-Laws.

Change to — Each group shall be expected to pay into the State Treasury its proportionate share to meet the annual budget, said sum to be apportioned by the Treasurer on a per capita basis figured from the total active membership as reported by the groups each year, and approved by the Finance Committee. Each group shall be free to make its own plan of work. But such work shall always be in harmony with the program of this Association as stated in Article II of the By-Laws.

Article X, Section 3

Now reads — The income of the Fund shall be used to aid girls in any department of Tufts College. The aid shall be given directly to the beneficiary in order that our touch may be more personal and less formal. The amount given each girl shall be $150.00 a year, more or less, according to the needs of the girl and the money available. In making the choice of beneficiaries, preference shall be given to girls from Universalist families, although aid may be given to those of other connections if thought best.

Change to — The income of the Fund shall be used to aid girls in any department of Tufts University. The aid shall be given directly to the beneficiary in order that our touch may be more personal and less formal. The amount given each girl shall vary, according to the needs of the girl and the money available. In making the choice of beneficiaries, preference shall be given to girls from Universalist families, although aid may be given to those of other connections if thought best.

Article XI

Now reads — These by-laws may be amended at any annual meeting of the Association by a majority of the voters present, due public notice of such proposed amendments having been given in the April issue of the Christian Leader.

Change to — These By-Laws may be amended at any annual meeting of the Association by a majority of the voters present, due public notice of such proposed amendments having been given in the April issue of The Universalist Leader.

RHODE ISLAND ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSALIST WOMEN

The annual meeting of the Rhode Island State A.U.W. will be held at the First Universalist Church of Woonsocket, 78 Earle Street, May 21, 1959, at 11 A.M., for the purpose of election of officers and any other business that should come before this body.

Registration begins at 10:30 A.M.

Mrs. Louise Inman of the Doolittle Home will bring the afternoon message.

— Mrs. Henry H. Schooley
Corresponding Secretary

WAKEFIELD REPORTS PROGRESS

Following the *Advance* program, Wakefield Universalists have added twenty-five new church members to their rolls recently, and report an increase of three thousand dollars in pledging receipts during the past two years. Active study and social programs are carried on in eight organizational groupings in the Parish. The minister, Rev. George H. Wood, is the ministerial advisor of the executive board of the Wakefield Council of Churches.

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NOTICES

CENTRAL FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

February 6, 1959: VOTED to approve the action of the Ohio Fellowship Committee in renewing to Joseph Nerad, a licentiate, the right to perform the Christian ordinances.

February 17, 1959: VOTED to approve the action of the New York Fellowship Committee in granting reciprocal fellowship to Christopher G. Raible, an ordained Unitarian clergyman.

VOTED to approve the action of the Massachusetts Fellowship Committee in granting reciprocal fellowship to E. Palmer Clarke, an ordained Unitarian clergyman.

VOTED to approve the action of the Massachusetts Fellowship Committee in granting reciprocal fellowship to Bruno J. Visco, an ordained Unitarian clergyman.

February 25, 1959: VOTED to approve the action of the Massachusetts Fellowship Committee in granting reciprocal fellowship to Ralph W. Stutzman, an ordained Unitarian clergyman.

— ESTHER A. RICHARDSON
General Secretary

MIDWEST UNIVERSALIST CONFERENCE

Following is an excerpt from the minutes of the Board of Directors of the Midwest Universalist Conference held in Chicago February 24-25, 1959:

Resolved that the Midwest Universalist Conference Board of Directors recommend to the General Assembly at Syracuse that complete and functional merger of the American Unitarian Association and The Universalist Church of America be effected, and resolved further that, this recommendation be published in *The Universalist Leader* and the *Unitarian Register.*

— HELEN CROSS, *Secretary*

OHIO FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

The Ohio Fellowship Committee has renewed the License to Preach for one year for Joseph Nerad.

— SADIE B. BURGESS, *Secretary*

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BENJAMIN B. HERSEY, *Dean*

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VISITING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA?

Don't fail to attend beautiful Throop Memorial Universalist Church, 300 South Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena. Sunday mornings: Youth Fellowship at 10:30, Church School at 10:45; Worship at 11. Dr. Harmon M. Gehr, Minister.

CRACKLING

The leading soloist in the church cantata was unable to get a babysitter. So she had to drag her reluctant young son to every practice session. Finally, completely bored with the reiterated musical expression, he rebelled and insisted on remaining at home.

"But, darling," the young mother remonstrated, "you should learn to enjoy church music. Why, the angels sing around God's throne all day long!"

"Well," said the unregenerate young offspring, "I just don't see how God can stand it."

— *The Watchman-Examiner*

* * * *

Tourist: "Many big fish in this part of the country?"

Native: "Many big fish! Lady, we don't allow boys and small men around here to bait a hook unless they're tied to a tree."

— *The Watchman-Examiner*

Starr King School of Ministry
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June 57

(Section 520, P.L.&R.)

NOTICES

UNIVERSALIST WOMAN'S ALLIANCE

The Universalist Woman's Alliance will meet at Bethany Union, Friday, April 17, 1959, at eleven o'clock.

The Rev. Peter Y. Shih will speak on *Christian Work Among the Chinese in the United States.*

Luncheon, seventy-five cents.

For reservations, call Mrs. Dumas, CI 7-9078.

— MARION H. PIKE, *Secretary*

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSALIST WOMEN

Official Call

The seventy-fourth annual meeting of the Massachusetts Association of Universalist Women will be held at the Attleboro Universalist Church, May 15, 1959, 10 A.M., for the hearing of the annual reports, the election of officers, for voting on proposed revision of the Bylaws, and for any other business which shall legally come before the meeting.

— MRS. JOHN H. MILLER
Recording Secretary

CRACKLING

"I want some magazines several years old," said the young man to the clerk. "I'm a doctor, and I want them for my waiting room."

"Of course, you're joking?"

"Not at all. Why should everybody know I just started to practice yesterday?"

—*The Watchman-Examiner*

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